



Canton School Committee
Open Meeting Minutes
November 17, 2022

A. Call to Order: Chair Merenda made a motion to convene the November 17, 2022 Canton School Committee meeting at 6:05 pm. Motion was made by Kendall O'Halloran and seconded by Laura Arboleda.

Vote was unanimous and recorded as:

Kristian Merenda	yea		
Kendall O'Halloran	yea		
Maureen Moran	yea		
Laura Arboleda	yea		
4	yeas	0	nays

Absent: Nichola Gallagher
Ms. Emma Cummings
Superintendent Folan

Also Present:

Ms. Sarah Shannon, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Stephen Marshall, Director of Finance and Operations
Samantha Pham, Student Representative
Joanne Campbell, Recording Secretary

Guests:
Ms. Catherine Eckersley, Performing Arts Coordinator
Mr. Danny Erickson, Athletic Director

B. Superintendent's Report: Assistant Superintendent Shannon presented District progress, highlights, and accolades.

Highlights

Cantonstock: Cantonstock was a huge success featuring more than 500 students and families, raising about \$20,000.

GMS Student Forum: School Committee Members, Superintendent Derek Folan, and GMS Principal Jon Mulhern enjoyed the opportunity to meet and talk with students at the GMS student forum on Friday, Nov. 4. The CHS student forum will be held tomorrow, Friday, Nov. 18.

Updates

Safety Update: This safety update comes after a Nov. 7 incident at CHS. CPD School Resource Officer Ensley Cotard and administration were on site and addressed the disturbance immediately. During the "Shelter in Place", CPD, CHS administration and CHS successfully used de-escalation

strategies to address the matter. Both CHS and CPD opened investigations for a comprehensive follow up and accountability.

Mr. Sperling reinforced that all doors will be locked during the school day, and he reviewed protocols for screening visitors in through the front door. He added supervision in the morning and recommended a camera be added to the bus loop. If any parents or guardians have any questions or concerns, please contact Principal Sperling by phone or email. On Friday, Nov. 18th, Superintendent Folan and Principal Sperling will meet with Canton Police Department to further debrief and discuss school safety. Principal Sperling will follow up with an email to the community on Monday, Nov. 21st.

Acknowledgments

National Educational Support Professionals Day: Educational Support Professionals (ESPs) Day was yesterday, November 16, 2022. There are nine services under the Education Support Professionals umbrella, including clerical, custodial and maintenance, food, health and student, para-educators, security, skilled trades, technical, and transportation services.

Substitute Educators Day: We will recognize our substitute workers on Friday, November 18. Our substitutes provide a critical link in the education of students by serving as a bridge to provide continued quality education to children in the temporary absence of regular classroom educators.

Thanksgiving: The 96th annual Thanksgiving football game between Canton and Stoughton will be played at Canton High School's WWII Veterans' Memorial Field at 10 a.m on Thursday, November 24th.

Indicators of Excellence

November 8 Professional Day Update: On Tuesday, November 8, 2022, a full-day professional day of learning was held for all Unit A educators. They engaged in work to further the creation of a coherent, District vision of high-quality teaching, learning and leading and the development of intellectually challenging tasks.

GMS XC Spotlight: Congratulations to GMS 8th grader Lauren Raffetto on her 1st place win at the USATF-sanctioned New England Junior Olympic Cross Country Championship meet, on Sunday, November 13. Lauren ran in the Girl's 4 km and placed 1st in the race out of 83 runners.

National Honor Society Induction: Congratulations to the 62 CHS National Honor Society Inductees!

GMS Author Visit: CPS 2018 graduate and published novelist, Lauren DiTullio, presented creative writing tips to Mr. Ghostlaw's seventh-grade English classes this week.

Important Dates and Events

Nov. 18	Early Release, PreK-8, Conferences
Nov. 18-20	CHS Drama Fall Play, CHS Auditorium, 7:00 pm on Nov. 18 & 19, 2:00 pm on Nov. 20
Nov. 23	Early Release - Thanksgiving Break
Nov. 24-25	No School - Thanksgiving Break

Dec. 1	School Committee Meeting, CHS DLL, 6:00 pm
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Chair Merenda welcomed Student Representative, Samantha Phan.

Ms. Moran inquired if there are missed opportunities on half day professional development for professional and ancillary staff including ABA's, EAs, SLPA's. Ms. Shannon indicated that, per their contracts, ABA's and EA's do not participate in this particular PD, but do participate on early release PD days. This particular PD included PT/OT/SLP's. PD topics are gleaned from surveys and listening sessions. School principals set the agendas and administration provides learning opportunities for what units are asking for and what is relevant for those staff members. Most recently, the units asked for "reveal path" learning (the new math program). Ms. Moran asked if PD is available to administrators on these days. Ms. Shannon stated that administrators act as facilitators for these sessions, but do have PD opportunities during Teaching and Learning and cabinet meetings as well as group book reading and discussion. Additionally, some principals have been sent to MASQ for more learning opportunities.

For Unit E, administration is publicizing that professional development is a part of their contract. Additionally, with the help of the District's partnership with Curry College, some Unit E members are taking advantage of course work at Curry and applying for reimbursement once classwork is completed.

Ms. Moran asked about AP teacher participation in PD. Ms. Shannon replied that some AP educators sign up for PD and get reimbursed. The District also provides reimbursement for outside PD for new teachers when their department asks them to attend. Additionally, CHS principal Mr. Sperling is looking for ways to host AP professional development.

ACTION ITEM: Ms. Moran asked Ms. Shannon for a breakdown by Unit (A and E) as well as AP educators, of the numbers of staff who are taking advantage of PD days and reimbursable PD and bring this information back to the School Committee for discussion in a future meeting.

C. Teaching and Learning Report: Performing Arts Coordinator, Ms. Catherine Eckersley, provided an update on the new Grade 5 music programming changes. Historically, both Band and Orchestra instrument lessons were held before the beginning of the school day. This year, they are being held during the school day. Ms. Eckersley noted the impact has been substantial. Access to the program, enrollment, retention, diversity and skill level of the student population has increased along with an improved quality of student experience. Total enrollment has almost doubled. Ms. Eckersley thanked the Committee for their generosity and support in the "loaner instruments" program. Ms. Eckersley noted that there are spacing constraints; these are being managed thus far. Ms. Eckersley and her team are working on next steps for advancing inclusivity via universal design and peer learning and leadership in the music program.

Ms. Moran asked about the prevalence and causes for instrument repair. Ms. Eckersley has done a lot of work to grow the instrument inventory to accommodate students; she noted that, generally, students handle their instruments with care, but an instrument has a life of only about 10 years. Some are "classroom" instruments that do not go home with the student, but still need regular maintenance.

D. Unfinished Business:

1. **Capital Budget Presentation:** Mr. Marshall presented an amended FY24 Capital Budget based on School Committee suggestions. The updated budget includes painting at the Luce (approximately \$20k), \$15k to begin work on district landscaping, \$30k for 10 touchview board replacements, and \$30k for program improvement for Robotics. Mr. Marshall also addressed some budget items that will be managed through the operating budget and other sources.
Mr. Marshall disclosed that an energy assessment is in process. The results, including future consideration for roof solar panels, will be discussed after the Thanksgiving holiday.

Chair Merenda called for a motion to accept the Capital Budget as presented. Motion was made by Kendall O'Halloran and seconded by Laura Arboleda.

Vote was unanimous and recorded as:

Kristian Merenda	yea
Kendall O'Halloran	yea
Maureen Moran	yea
Laura Arboleda	yea

4 yeas 0 nays

2. **Alpha Solutions Capital Planning:** Mr. Marshall presented the Alpha Solutions Capital Planning proposal for a 5-10 years of Capital Planning in the District. Alpha Solutions will perform a lifecycle cost analysis including risk analysis of existing building systems. The report will include a software solution for Preventative Maintenance scheduling and new lighting at the athletic fields. Mr. Marshall expects the report to be available by early Spring 2023 in time for the District's budgeting cycle. Chair Merenda applauded this opportunity to move from reactionary to proactive actionability.
3. **Transportation Update:** Mr. Marshall reported that overall, there has been a marked improvement in both yellow bus and van transportation. Since the last School Committee meeting, First Student is investing more time in alleviating issues and improving daily communications. The Luce/St. John's route is still a concern, but the district endeavors to resolve the issues. Mr. Marshall noted he would like to see improved communication with families and encouraged all to sign up for the app and fill out the survey. The district will forward the original email explaining the app in case community members need the information. For Vanpool, all routes are covered. On-time pick up and drop off has improved, but still needs adjusting. Ms. Arboleda wondered whether a meeting with the van company was still warranted. Mr. Marshall indicated that a meeting was not necessary at this time, but did advise that regular meetings be scheduled in the new year as check-ins.

D. New Business:

1. **Athletic Update:** Mr. Danny Erickson, CPS Athletic Director, reported that transportation through First Student has been exceptional.
Citing safety, ADA accessibility, a more welcoming sight, and the new fencing as an amazing improvement, Mr. Erickson thanked the School Committee for their part in supporting the bleacher project.

Mr. Erickson noted he is receiving positive feedback and high adoption rates for the new digital ticketing system as it allows quicker, more efficient entry and exit.

Mr. Erickson announced that the district has rejoined the PCA (Positive Coaching Alliance). The alliance offers workshops and general positive information and tactics for players and coaches. Canton team captains have attended workshops on hazing and team building. There is a shortage of officials due to abusive behavior from athletes and spectators. PCA also advocates a positive environment for officials. Mr. Erickson is noticing a slow improvement.

Mr. Erickson announced a new state tournament format that seems successful. He talked about the new MIAA rules that recognize federal decisions supporting an athlete's legal right to profit from NIL (name, image and likeness). The Athletic Department is educating the local community and giving guidance to parents and athletes about NIL so their amateur status is not lost. He cautioned that once lost, amateur status is lost forever.

Chair Merenda offered School Committee resources in resolving the officiating shortage.

2. **Policy Update:** Members of the policy subcommittee shared updated District appendix language around M.G.L. c. 71, §37H3/4 and asked for a vote on language changes to the appendix of CPS Handbooks and File JIC of the CPS Policy Manual. Following state recommendations, substantive changes to M.G.L. c. 71, §37H3/4 include the removal of the word "should" replaced with "will" when disciplinary action is warranted. Consideration and implementation of alternative remedies will be employed and documented before suspension of the student is meted out, unless there is concern about serious bodily injury or other serious harm upon another person while in school. It was noted that CPS has already taken measures in support of this change.

Chair Merenda asked for a motion to approve and accept the new language changes in 37H3/4 for all CPS Handbooks. Motion was made by Kendall O'Halloran and seconded by Laura Arboleda.

Vote was unanimous and recorded as:

Kristian Merenda	yea
Kendall O'Halloran	yea
Maureen Moran	yea
Laura Arboleda	yea

4	yeas	0	nays
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Chair Merenda asked for a motion to approve and adopt new language changes for File JIC of the CPS Policy Manual.

Motion was made by Kendall O'Halloran and seconded by Laura Arboleda.

Vote was unanimous and recorded as:

Kristian Merenda	yea
Kendall O'Halloran	yea
Maureen Moran	yea
Laura Arboleda	yea

4	yeas	0	nays
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3. **District Goal Updates:** Assistant Superintendent Shannon provided an update on District Goals Priority #2 & Priority #4.

Priority #2 goal pertaining to behavioral expectations and proactive steps the District has taken to build relationships and connections to schools, including the following:

1. The development and implementation of PreK-12 systems at Rodman ECP, Hansen, JFK and Luce to track behavioral incidents and design clear response protocols for the different levels. Ms. Shannon walked through the referral process, parental notification, teacher response and follow-up-all information is available on the tracker. The tracker has been well-received by educators and administrators and has allowed for appropriate and clear responses and follow up, and tracking of behavior patterns.
 - a. Building administrator receives an email when a staff member submits an incident.
 - b. Building administrators can observe and refer back to previous incidents.
 - c. Tracking system acts as a repository of information that may be used to analyze trends and patterns by student, day of week, time, staff response, etc. that can be viewed daily and during SRT (Student Response Teams).
 - d. Monthly meetings with building leadership to review behavioral patterns (through qualitative and quantitative data analysis) and best practice studies.
2. Quarterly Bus/van meetings with administration and transportation reps to review expectations, incident response protocols, and the camera system allowing the administration to address trends and incidents. The recently released bus survey will also give data to help address issues.
3. Staff professional development in restorative practices. Two Tier 1 Restorative Justice training sessions were held over the summer and an additional one in October. Twenty staff (maximum attendees allowed) and school administrators from all roles across the District attended. There is a wait list for the March 2023 training. Each building will have access to seven hours of coaching from Suffolk's Restorative Justice Center. Additionally, each school is working to introduce restorative practices at the elementary and secondary levels.

Priority #4 Student Information System (SIS) goal pertaining to the Selection Committee:

The first meeting of the SIS Selection Committee was held Nov. 8th. Chairperson, Ms. Julie Shore, reviewed the District Goal, committee's mission, the process, timeline, and expectations. A staff survey has been distributed, and a family SIS survey will be forthcoming in early December.

E. Public Comment. There were no public comment requests in person or online.

F. Director of Finance and Operations Report: Mr. Marshall reviewed the Esser III grant allocations from the state and to date disbursements. (Esser III is the last of the COVID grant funds awarded to the District.) Of note, allocations may be used to cover stipends for teachers and instructional staff to address learning loss throughout COVID, contractual services, and other related supplies. AirPods purchased with grant dollars were deemed an "unallowable" expense. Mr. Marshall hopes to use these funds to support tutoring needs and retention of a math interventionist in the high school and middle school. He is currently building a program to support the math program and expects it to start January 2023, running through June 2024. The District was able to pay Support Staff salaries through the operating budget. Mr. Marshall noted that he had held back some

of the funds in case there was another COVID spike. However, he is confident the District will spend down the grant money, and is working with the Cabinet on how to expend it in the best way.

Ms. Moran expressed concern over depleting the funds as soon as possible and wondered how to provide equitable services during school hours considering the staff shortage. Mr. Marshall will provide Ms. Moran with a line item breakdown.

Revolving Accounts:

Food Service: Mr. Marshall is working with Ms. Lawless to review expenditures and share ideas on how to best disburse funds such as staff modeling and concentrating on the center of the plate. It is important to note that CPS Food Service is self-funded, so purchasing is constrained by state regulations.

Student Parking Fees: Mr. Marshall is considering using these monies to improve signage and re-line parking spaces.

Extra-Curricular Drama-Hansen-Mr. Marshall noted that the negative \$\$ will be offset by ticket sales of the upcoming play.

A question was raised on how gate receipts from athletic events could be used. Mr. Marshall indicated that these dollars can only be used for athletics.

G. Consent Agenda:

1. Regular Session Minutes: November 3, 2022
2. Executive Session Minutes: November 3, 2022
3. Scholarship Approval: Reissfelder Group Scholarship - 2 in the amount of \$2,500.
4. Warrants: November 18, 2022

Ms. Moran requested the Scholarship approval be pulled from the Consent Agenda for further discussion.

Chair Merenda then called for a motion to approve Consent Agenda numbers 1,2 and 4. Kendall O'Halloran made the motion and Laura Arboleda seconded.

Vote was unanimous for Consent Agenda numbers 1,2 and 4 and recorded as:

Kristian Merenda	yea
Kendall O'Halloran	yea
Maureen Moran	yea
Laura Arboleda	yea

4	yeas	0	nays
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A discussion ensued over Ms. Moran's concern about equity without name blind applications. She stated that name blind applications level the playing field. Chair Merenda suggested getting HR guidance on best practices and philosophies. Ms. Shannon disclosed that the high school staff is discussing increasing access to all students. This conversation has started and staff and administration are weighing the pros and cons and want to be cognizant of the benefactors wishes.

Ms. Arboleda asked how the process is usually handled. Ms. Shannon did not know the specifics, but stated that she will get the information. Ms. Moran asked for a timeline for resolution of this issue; however, Ms. Shannon responded that she could not guess on the outcomes. A question on whether there is a policy governing these

scholarships—no one was aware of a policy, that the School Committee’s purview was to approve the money coming in. Ms. Arboleda requested that this topic (name blind scholarship applications) be brought back to the School Committee for further discussion.

Chair Merenda called for a motion to approve the Reissfelder Group Scholarship (2 in the amount of \$2,500) as part of the Consent Agenda. Kendall O’Halloran made the motion and Laura Arboleda seconded.

Vote was unanimous for Consent Agenda number 3 and recorded as:

Kristian Merenda	yea
Kendall O’Halloran	yea
Maureen Moran	yea
Laura Arboleda	yea

4 yeas 0 nays

H. Update of Sub-Committee, Task Force and Liaison Posts:

Ms. Samantha Pham, Student Representative to the School Committee, noted her role includes monthly meetings that discuss what is best for the students and communicating School Committee proceedings back to the student population.

Mr. Marshall attended the BRC meeting last evening. Discussions included CCPC projects and updates to the JFK. The Bleacher project is almost complete and bidding for Spring 2023 HVAC work is underway. An RFS for the GMS project manager has been completed, and Mr. Marshall is working with Ms. Lawless on a pilot program for composting and recycling.

Ms. Moran announced that the Budget Committee has been officially renamed Finance and Budget Committee to include all the work encompassed by that committee.

Kendall O’Halloran noted that the Policy Committee continues to work on Section D and the next meeting is on Dec. 8th. Content and Communications-an ad congratulating all Fall sports teams will be published in early to mid-December and CCPC is working on pre-apps.

I. Other Business: There were no other business requests.

J. Future Business: The next Open Session meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 1, 2022, @ 6:00 pm.

K. Adjournment: Chair Merenda made a motion to adjourn the November 17, 2022 Canton School Committee meeting at 8:42 pm. Motion was made by Kendall O’Halloran and seconded by Laura Arboleda.

Vote was unanimous and recorded as:

Kristian Merenda	yea
Kendall O’Halloran	yea
Maureen Moran	yea
Laura Arboleda	yea

4 yeas 0 nays